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ABSTRACT

The objectives of this guide are to: (1) provide materials, activities, and lessons in grades K through 12 that will actively engage students in learning about the teaching profession; (2) increase understanding of the complex issues facing teachers; (3) develop an understanding of the important role teachers play in a democratic society; (4) stimulate interest in teaching as a career; (5) build understanding of the significant role teachers play in the lives of the students, as well as in shaping the future of society; and (6) help teachers share the joys and challenges of being a teacher. Selected materials and ideas within a general context of grade levels and subject areas are presented. Subject areas discussed include language arts, social studies, mathematics, and interdisciplinary activities involved in teaching. For each grade level grouping, reading materials and suggested activities are listed. (MT)

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TEACHING ABOUT TEACHING:

Selected Resources and Classroom Activities

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Teaching .... It's a vital profession

New Jersey State Department of Education

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TEACHING ABOUT TEACHING:

Selected Resources and Classroom Activities

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TEACHING ABOUT TEACHING:

Selected Resources and Classroom Activities

INTRODUCTION

> Teachers were the impetus behind this project. They told us that students, parents and the community at large needed a better understanding of the art, science and profession of teaching.
>
> -- Commissioner Saul Cooperman

Teachers are vital to our schools, our communities and our society as a whole. No job is more important than preparing our young people for the future.

Teaching is a challenging and complex profession, demanding creativity, compassion and managerial ability while offering many personal and professional rewards.

To improve society's understanding and appreciation of the teaching profession a public information campaign is being conducted by the New Jersey State Department of Education. The impetus for this project came from comments made to Commissioner Saul Cooperman by the 1985 New Jersey County Teachers of the Year. These teachers, as well as others statewide, voiced concern that students, parents and the public are not fully cognizant of the demands and rewards of the profession. They indicated that teachers and the public also need to become more informed about the state's educational initiatives to provide high quality instruction for the children of New Jersey.

A variety of resources and activities will be utilized. They include: brochures on teaching in New Jersey and state requirements for teaching; radio, television and print public service advertisements highlighting the various aspects of teaching; posters, bumper stickers and buttons designed to reinforce the campaign's theme, "Teaching...It's a Vital Profession."

This resources and activities guide was developed for teachers who indicated that they wanted to help their students explore the teaching profession but needed appropriate materials. The suggested strategies, projects and materials are aimed at fostering a better understanding of the contributions, rewards, and challenges of being a teacher.

The resources and activities guide is based upon the premise that in order for students to fully understand its role, the teaching profession needs to be highlighted from kindergarten through high school.

Purposes

The objectives of this guide are to:

1. Provide materials, activities, and lessons in grades K through 12 which will actively engage students in learning about the teaching profession.

2. Increase understanding of the complex issues facing teachers in contemporary American society.

3. Develop an understanding of the important role teachers play in a democratic society.

4. Stimulate interest in teaching as a career.

5. Build understanding of the significant role teachers play in the lives of their students, as well as in shaping the future of society.

6. Help teachers share the joys and challenges of being a teacher.

How to Use This Guide

This guide is not intended to serve as a comprehensive curriculum package. Rather, it presents selected materials and ideas within a general context of grades and subject areas. Much of the material can actually be used in a variety of grades and disciplines by adapting it to meet the objectives of the instructor and the needs, abilities and interests of the class. Thus, the imagination and creativity of individual teachers and students will determine how these ideas and resources are adapted and expanded.

It is therefore recommended that teachers review the resources and activities guide overall, rather than reading only the sections that relate directly to their specific teaching assignments. In this way, they can be certain to identify all ideas and materials which may be useful.

ELEMENTARY GRADES

Using Children's Literature

Children's literature depicting the teaching profession provides excellent motivation for lessons on the profession. Below you will find a list of books on the subject. A brief synopsis of their content is included.

Reading Materials K-4

Allard, H. & Marshall, J. (1977). Miss Nelson Is Missing. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company.

Children in Class 207 give their kind teacher a difficult time. She is temporarily replaced by a substitute and interesting things happen. Humorous with a substantive message.

Allard, H. & Marshall, J. (1982). Miss Nelson is Back. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company.

Miss Nelson has a tonsillectomy. Children take advantage of the school's principal. Ms. Swamp, the substitute teacher, returns to shape up the class. Interesting lessons are learned by the children.

Allard, H. & Marshall, J. (1985). Miss Nelson Has A Field Day. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company.

Miss Nelson, disguised as Ms. Swamp, gets the school's football team in line. Opportunities to discuss how teachers achieve their goals.

Barkin, C. & James E. (1975). Sometimes I Hate School. Milwaukee: Roundtree Editions.

Discusses child's feelings caused by the disruption of a secure teacher-pupil relationship. Deals with home and school issues; importance of a teacher in children's lives.

Cohen, Miriam. (1972). The New Teacher. New York: MacMillan Publishing Company.

Describes the difficulties a new teacher faces. Shows how, through resourcefulness, she wins the class over.

Cohen, Miriam. (1980). First Grade Takes a Test. New York: Greenwillow Books.

Describes the supportive role of a teacher as her students prepare to take a test.

Gilson, Jamie. (1983). 4-B Goes Wild. New York: Lothrop, Lee & Shepard.

Humorous story of pranks children play. Includes a message about not taking advantage of a teacher.

Greenfield, Eloise. (1977). Mary McLeod Bethune. New York: Thomas E. Cromwell Company.

Depicts the life of a black teacher who did not learn to read until she was 11 but who went on to make major contributions.

Wittman, Sally. (1982). The Wonderful Mrs. Trumbly. New York: Harper and Row.

Centers on the importance of a good relationship between a teacher and her students.

Reading Materials 5-8

Carruth, Kaiser, Ella. (1966). She Wanted to Read. New York: Abingdon Press.

Story of the life of Mary McLeod Bethune, a black teacher who first learned to read at age 11 but went on to become an important educator.

DeAngeli, Marguerite. (1939). Skippack School. New York: Doubleday.

True story of a much loved schoolmaster in Skippack, Pennsylvania. Set in the 1700s. Describes life at that time, as well as the important role a teacher played in the lives of early immigrants to America.

Fisher, Leonard Everett. (1967) The Schoolmasters. New York: Franklin Watts, Inc.

Describes education during colonial times. Explains how teachers were regarded, how discipline problems were handled and the nature of the curriculum.

Fleming, Alice. (1965). Great Women Teachers. New York: J. P. Lippincott Company.

Focuses on the lives of several prominent women educators, such as: Emma Willard, founder of first school for girls; Mary Lyon, founder of Mount Holyoke College; Elizabeth Palmer Peabody, who brought the idea of kindergarten to American education; and other educators.

MacCracken, Mary. (1981). City Kid. Boston: Little, Brown and Company.

True story of how one teacher's efforts, attention and caring changed a child's life for the better. Appropriate for better readers.

Malone, Mary. (1971). Anne Sullivan. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons.

Biography of Anne Sullivan, Helen Keller's teacher.

Neimack, Anne E. (1983). A Deaf Child Listened. New York: William Morrow and Company.

Tells the story of Thomas Gallaudet, headmaster of the first school for deaf children in the U.S. He developed and taught American sign language.

Peare, Catherine Owens. (1951). Mary McLeod Bethune. New York: The Vanguard Press.

Biography of famous black educator. Appropriate for better readers.

Spinner, Stephanie, ed. (1973). Live and Learn, Stories About Students and Their Teachers. New York: MacMillan Publishing Company, Inc.

Short stories by famous authors such as Bernard Malamud, Phillip Roth, Joyce Carol Oates, and T. H. White. Focuses on what children learn from teachers and vice versa. Appropriate for better readers.

Wilder, Laura Ingalls. (1943). These Happy Golden Years. New York: Harper and Row.

Part of a series. Describes Laura's experiences as a school teacher. She starts her career at age 16!

Wilkie, Katherine E. & Mosley, Elizabeth R. (1965). Teacher of the Blind. New York: Julian Messner.

Tells the story of Dr. Samuel Gridley Howe who set up one of the first schools for the blind in 1800s. He was also an abolitionist and worked for the rights of the mentally handicapped.

Activities Based Upon Children's Literature

Grades K-4

* Read a book or story to the class during story time. Discuss it and ask questions such as:

  + What was the teacher like in the story?
  + Did the children enjoy having him/her as a teacher? Why?
  + Would you like to have someone like the teacher in the book as your teacher? Why?
  + How did the teacher feel about the children?
  + How did the teacher help his/her students?
  + Have you ever met a teacher like the one in the story? Tell us about him/her.
  + If the book is part of a series: would you like to read more about this teacher? (Provide a list of additional books or read the next one at another time.)

Grades K-8

* If you choose not to read the story aloud, place it where students can review it on their own. As part of a learning center project, have students read the story and answer the questions listed above.

* During teacher recognition week or some similar program or event, have a variety of books dealing with teaching available in the library corner or reading center.

* Dramatize a scene from one of the books in class.

* Write a class play based on one of the stories and perform it for other classes in an assembly.

* Videotape students acting out scenes from the books.

* Write a class book about teachers who have made differences in the children's lives or about experiences similar to those in the book you read aloud. Each child may contribute a page which can include an illustration.

* Design a new cover for the book you read or an original cover for a class-written book.

* Write a blurb for a book cover.

* Reading comprehension skills:

  + Ask students, what was the main idea of the story?
  + Summarize the book.
  + Develop a vocabulary list from the story.

* Make a class bulletin board showing how teachers help children. You may want to take photographs of teachers at work in your own school. Have students write short explanations of the pictures.

* Invite another teacher to come to your class as a guest. Develop a list of questions beforehand with children which they can ask during the interview. Some questions might be:

  + Where did you go to school?
  + When did you decide to become a teacher?
  + Why did you go into teaching?
  + What are some of your interests or hobbies outside of teaching?
  + What are you most proud of as a teacher?
  + What was the funniest thing that happened to you while teaching?

* Have your students read a biography about a famous teacher. Ask that they compare and contrast it with the life of a person famous in another field.

* Assign an essay on topics such as:

  + A teacher in my school really helped me when...
  + Yesterday, I was the teacher in my class for one period. The strangest thing happened when...
  + If I were the teacher in my class, I would...

* Make hand puppets and dramatize one of the books by creating your own puppet show. Invite another class in to see your performance.

Activities Correlated With Content Areas

Social Studies

Topic	Suggested Activities
The Family	* Discuss the family and parents' jobs. If any parents are teachers, invite them to visit class and share reasons why they went into the field; what and where they teach; as well as some personal background.
	* For kindergarteners, have a corner where they can dress up. As part of a role-playing activity encourage them to play the part of a teacher.
The School	* Interview teachers in the school or from other districts.
	* Invite a teacher who works with children at a different level or with special needs to come to class and be interviewed.
	* Make a bulletin board showing how teachers help children. You can have children make their own drawings or take photographs of the faculty at work. Have children write short compositions explaining the pictures.
	* Discuss with students how a teacher "made a difference in your life."
The Community	* Discuss community involvement and the local school board.
	* Invite a teacher who also serves the community in another capacity to visit your class. He/she can explain the additional community service, such as serving on the school board, as a member of a service organization, or perhaps as a municipal official (mayor, council member, or member of a board or commission).
Founding of Our Nation	* Compare and contrast teaching in colonial times with today. Include the following topics: + Who are the teachers? + Teachers' education, sex and socio-economic status + Subjects taught and how they are presented to students

+ Who are the students?
+ What is their background and goals of education?
+ The school's physical plant
+ Discipline methods
+ The importance of education in a democratic society

* Write a diary entry of a New England school teacher during the American Revolution. Incorporate materials that will help the reader get a sense of what education was like during those days.

* Discuss Nathan Hale's role during the American Revolution. Highlight the fact that he was a teacher.

* Visit an old colonial schoolhouse if there is one in your local area. Recommend to students who plan to visit Washington, D.C. that they visit the Museum of History and Technology where there is an excellent replica of an old-fashioned classroom.

* Make a diorama of a colonial schoolhouse.

Establishing Our Nation

* Throughout our history, teachers have played an important part in contributing to the growth and establishment of democratic practices in American society. As you and your students work on a particular aspect of our nation's history, you may want to include in your studies the significance of these teachers:

+ Nathan Hale (1755-1776) - Hero of American Revolution.

+ Horace Mann (1796-1859) - "Father of the Common Schools," leader in founding elementary education programs in U.S.

+ Elizabeth Ann Seton (1774-1821) - Founder of the American Sisters of Charity.

+ Booker T. Washington (1856-1915) - Founder of Tuskegee Institute, advisor to Presidents Theodore Roosevelt and William Howard Taft, author and defender of human rights.

+ Emma Willard (1787-1870) - Leader in women's rights. Established school for women to provide equal educational opportunities.

+ Martha McChesney Berry (1866-1942) - First woman regent of Georgia's university system.

+ Mary McLeod Bethune (1875-1955) - Established schools and hospitals for black people who had not had them available.

- + John Dewey (1859-1952) - Educator whose ideas influence a great many of today's teaching practices.
- + William E. DuBois (1868-1963) - Scholar and leader in human rights movement.
- + Anne Sullivan Macy (1866-1936) - Teacher of Helen Keller.
- + Woodrow Wilson (1856-1924) - Educator, President of the U.S.
- + Dr. Samuel Gridley Howe (1801-1876) - Established one of the first schools for the blind, Perkins Institute. An abolitionist and advocate of rights of mentally ill.
- + Christa McAuliffe (1948-1986) - First teacher scheduled to travel into space. Died January 28, 1986 when the space shuttle Challenger exploded shortly after launching.

* Assign student reports on the lives of famous teachers.
* Role play important scenes from books.
* Have students dress up as famous teachers and relate to the class important parts of their lives.
* Work in committees on the lives of famous teachers. Have students present their findings in a creative manner, i.e., mural, dioramas, mobiles, with puppets or skits.

Geographic Regions

* When studying world regions, try to get a list of pen-pals from foreign countries. Have students correspond, and encourage them to find out about education in their pen-pals' homelands. Include:
  - + Years of compulsory education
  - + Qualifications for teachers
  - + Kinds and amount of homework
  - + What is studied
  - + What a typical school day is like
* If students in your class have attended school in other parts of our country or foreign nations, have them share their experiences.

Many of the suggestions listed above can easily be adapted to these curriculum areas:

* Women's History
* Black History

* Teacher Recognition Month
* Career Education
* Family Life

Language Arts

Topic	Suggested Activities
Listening Skills	* Using the literature listed earlier in the guide as a resource, read a selection aloud to class. Conduct listening skill lessons based on the story which encourage students to: + Note important details + Select important information pertinent to a specific topic + Detect clues that show the point of view of the author + Retell in their own words a summary of what they heard
Vocabulary Building and Spelling	* As part of a unit on etymology, include an investigation of words related to the teaching profession. Examples: education, pedagogue, teacher, lesson, scholar, professor, tutor, mentor, and knowledge. Add additional words with the help of your class. * Incorporate this word list in lessons on how to use the dictionary or the thesaurus. Lessons on synonyms can utilize these words as a starting point. They can also be included in spelling lists.
Writing Skills	* Assign students to keep a journal, writing in it daily. Ask them to include their reactions to the books they have read about teaching or their own experiences with teachers. * Write a concrete poem about a teacher or teaching in general. A concrete poem is a special form of poetry which is particularly appealing to students in the elementary grades. The words of the poem form a visual picture depicting the theme. (An excellent resource for background on strategies for teaching this form of poetry, as well as other styles of writing, is Children's Language and the Language Arts by C.J. Fisher and C.A. Terry, New York: McGraw Hill Book Company, 1982.) * Ask students to write a definition poem with an opening such as "A teacher is..." or "Teaching is..."

Reading Skills For Appreciation — See Activities listed under Activities Based Upon Children's Literature, K-8.

Mathematics

Word Problems * Word problems can be written to show how teachers use math skills to make decisions. For example, planning a class trip or party.

NOTE: Art, physical education, music and creative dramatics can be incorporated within many activities suggested in this guide. Hopefully, the ideas listed will assist you in using these disciplines to enrich your lessons.

SECONDARY GRADES

Exploring the Teaching Profession Through the Secondary School Curriculum

The following material explores teaching from various perspectives and is intended to help you present a realistic picture of the profession.

Topics addressed in this section include:

* The changing roles of teachers historically
* The impact great teachers have made on society
* How teachers as well as society view their status
* Current problems and future directions

The suggested strategies are intended to encourage critical thinking, decision-making and problem-solving skills using information gained in the content areas.

It is recommended that you review this section carefully to decide whether these materials and strategies, and the issues they may raise, are appropriate for your classes.

Using Literature to Focus on the Teaching Profession

Literature depicting the teaching profession provides a wealth of opportunities to encourage discussion and thinking about important educational questions. The books listed below could be useful. They are appropriate for better readers.

Braithwaite, E. R. (1960). To Sir, With Love. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall.

Story of a British Guianian who becomes a teacher in London.

Freedman, Rose. (1968). Freedom Builders: Great Teachers from Socrates to John Dewey: Little, Brown and Company.

Includes biographies of famous teachers through the ages.

Gibson, William. (1957). The Miracle Worker: A Play for Television. New York: Alfred A. Knopf.

Depicts the relationship between Helen Keller and her teacher, Anne Sullivan. Powerful drama.

Hentoff, Nat. (1977). Does Anybody Give a Damn? New York: Alfred A. Knopf.

Focuses on teachers and principals who truly care about their students. Describes strategies they use to improve education.

Hilton, James. (1934). Goodbye Mr. Chips. Boston: Little, Brown and Company.

A short novel describing the life of a British teacher from youth to old age.

Hunter, Evan. (1954). Blackboard Jungle. New York: Simon and Schuster.

Describes a new teacher's struggle in an urban high school in the 1950s. An absorbing book, it is however, somewhat violent and stereotypical.

Irving, Washington. (1819). "The Legend of Sleepy Hollow" from The Sketch-Book.

Short story set in New York. One of the main characters, Ichabod Crane, is a teacher.

Kaufman, Bel. (1964). Up the Down Staircase. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall.

Humorous, semifictionalized account of life as a new teacher in a New York City high school. Easy to read.

Rasey, Marie Y. (1953). It Takes Time. New York: Harper and Row.

A novel that centers on a woman's decision to become an elementary school teacher. Describes various methods of teaching.

Ryan, Kevin, ed. (1970). Don't Smile Until Christmas: Accounts of the First Year of Teaching. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

A collection of six autobiographical commentaries of beginning high school teachers.

Spinner, Stephanie, ed. (1973). Live and Learn, Stories About Students and Their Teachers, New York: MacMillan Publishing Company, Inc.

Short stories by famous authors, Bernard Malamud, Philip Roth, Joyce Carol Oates, T. H. White and others.

Stuart, Jesse. (1949). The Thread That Runs So True. New York: Charles Schribner's Sons.

An autobiographical account of the experiences of a teacher in a one-room school in rural America.

Washington, Booker T. (1963). Up From Slavery. New York: Doubleday.

Autobiography of Black educator.

Activities Correlated With Content Areas (9 - 12)

Language Arts

Topic	Suggested Activities
Literature, Writing, Oral Communication, Discussion Skills	* You may choose to use some of the books listed under Using Literature to Focus on the Teaching Profession for book reports and/or discussions of various literary forms, i.e., biography, autobiography and nonfiction. The fictional works lend themselves to analysis comparing students' real life experiences with teachers to those portrayed in the literature. * After reading one of the books on the list, have students write a book report answering some or all of these questions. + How did the teacher in the book influence his/her students? + Why did the character become a teacher? + What were the biggest problems confronted by the teacher? + What were the greatest rewards? + How did this book affect your image of teachers? + Did this character remind you of a teacher you know? If so, how? * These questions can be used either for individual assignments or as the springboard for class discussion. * Review ground rules for committee work. Have students work in small groups, and as a possible presentation, have one group share their thoughts with the class after reading different biographies, autobiographies or nonfiction works dealing with teaching. Allow time for question and answer periods. * In using fictional works, you may choose one or more for the entire class to read and discuss. Questions you might ask are: + How is the teacher portrayed by the author in the book, play or short story? + Is the character likeable? Why?

+ Is the character believable or stereotypical? Explain.
+ How does the teacher in the story make you feel about teachers?
+ How does your attitude toward teachers compare with that of the author?
+ Does the book provide background information about a particular historical time? If so, what was education like then? How do conditions and problems today compare with those in the story?

* Discuss Washington Irving's, "The Legend of Sleepy Hollow," and focus on Ichabod Crane. Write a different ending to the story. If possible, arrange a visit to Tarrytown, New York to visit the Sleepy Hollow Restoration.

* Encourage students to share books, short stories and plays outside of those listed which deal with the teaching profession. Add to the list if they seem worthwhile.

* Use readings to encourage students to increase their vocabulary by looking up the definitions of unfamiliar words and using them in their oral and written communication.

* Assign students to write poems featuring teachers or the teaching profession as the subject.

* Act out a scene from one of the books.

* Create a play from a situation involving relationships between teachers and students.

* Produce the play, <u>The Miracle Worker</u>. Perform for the public in general or for specific groups, such as a local senior citizens club or younger school-age children. Videotape the performance.

* Ask students to write short stories on how teachers influenced their lives.

* Ask students to write book cover blurbs for book reports dealing with teaching. Have them design appropriate covers as well.

* Direct students to assume that they are the literary critics for a newspaper and write reviews of the books listed.

* Direct students to assume that they are interviewers for television programs such as NBC's "Today" or ABC's "Good Morning America." Have them work in pairs with one playing the part of the author of the book (chosen from books listed), while the other conducts the interview.

* Using Quotations:

Throughout history, there has been commentary on teachers and the teaching profession. Below are several suggestions for using these quotations about teaching, followed by a list of quotations.

+ Use one or several to discuss what you think the author was saying about the teaching profession. For instance:

  - What was the author's attitude toward teachers and the profession?
  - Do you feel his/her position is correct? Why?
  - How does it compare with your own?
  - Would you consider teaching as a career? If so, why? If not, why not?

+ Use quotations to motivate a writing assignment on the importance of teachers in our lives and society, the profession in general, or key problems facing teachers today.

+ Have students add to the list of quotations. Identify and add statements by other important people.

+ Have students write three or four lines on their feelings about teaching and the importance of education. Develop your own class list of quotes from the students' statements.

QUOTATIONS:

"Thank God there are no free schools or printing...for learning has brought disobedience and heresy into the world, and printing has divulged them..."

--Sir William Berkeley,
a Governor of Virginia

"If you think education is expensive -- try ignorance."

--Derek Bok,
President of Harvard University

"Never discourage anyone...who continually makes progress, no matter how slow."

--Plato

"If, in instructing a child, you are vexed with it for want of adroitness, try, if you have never tried before to write with your left hand, and then remember that a child is all left hand."

--J. F. Boyse

"Don't limit a child to your own learning, for he was born in another time."

--Rabbinical saying

"Above all things we must take care that the child, who is not yet old enough to love his studies, does not come to hate them and dread the bitterness which he has once tasted, even when the years of infancy are left behind. His studies must be made an amusement."

--Marcus Fabius Quintilianus

"The whole art of teaching is only the art of awakening the natural curiosity of young minds for the purposes of satisfying it afterwards."

--Anatolē France

"A teacher affects eternity; he can never tell where his influence stops."

--Henry Brooks Adams

"I touch the future; I teach."

--Christa McAuliffe

+ Resources for further quotations:

  - Bartlett, John. (1980) Familiar Quotations, 15th edition. Boston: Little, Brown and Company.

  - Safir, L. & Safire, W. (1982). Good Advice. New York: Times Books.

Social Studies

Topic	Suggested Activities
World History	* As you study a period of history, include in your curriculum material that deals with education during those times. Possible content:

+ **Who received an education?**
+ **How were people educated?**

- + Who were the teachers? How were they trained?
- + How were they regarded by the rest of the society?
- + What were the schools like?
- + What was the curriculum?

* Develop the theme of how important education is to a free society. Focus on the power people have when they are educated. See the list of quotations about teaching and the profession under Language Arts Activities (Secondary School).

* Compare and contrast teaching during different periods of history with today. Times to consider:

- + Prehistoric Times (You may want students to read The Clan of the Cave Bear by Jean M. Auel)
- + Ancient Greece and Roman Era
- + Middle Ages
- + Renaissance
- + Reformation
- + Industrial Revolution
- + World War II - Pre-war Germany, Italy and Japan as well as the allies
- + Education in different nations today, including U.S.S.R., Japan, Great Britain, and Third World nations

* Discuss the lives and contributions of famous teachers from other nations or times. Include:

- + Socrates (ancient Greek philosopher and scholar)
- + Desiderius Erasmus (Dutch educator, 15th & 16th century)
- + Louis Braille (French, 19th century)
- + Sir William Osler (Canadian, 19th century)
- + James Y. C. Yen (Chinese, 20th century)
- + Johann Henrich Pestalozzi (Swiss, 18-19th centuries)
- + Golda Meir (Israeli, 20th century)
- + Jean Piaget (Swiss, 20th century)
- + Albert Einstein (American, 20th century)

* Ask students to do reports on these educators' lives and work.

* Have students role play the famous teachers and be able to answer questions about their lives and work.

* Invite foreign born students or their parents to discuss education in their counties, stressing the role of the teaching profession. Students who have studied abroad may be called upon to share their experiences too.

American History

* Similar approaches to the ones recommended for a world history class can be used with social studies courses in American history.

  + As you study a period, look at education during the time.
  + See "Social Studies Activities" for possible content.
  + Develop the theme of the importance of education in a democratic nation.
  + Compare and contrast education practices during different periods of American History:

    - Colonial America
    - American Revolution and the Founding of the New Nation
    - Jacksonian Democracy
    - Civil War
    - Reconstruction
    - World War I
    - World War II
    - 1960s
    - Today

* Discuss and study the contributions of famous American educators in the context of learning about a particular historical era or as part of recognizing the women's movement, Black history month or teacher recognition week. Include:

  + Nathan Hale, 18th century
  + Horace Mann, 19th century
  + Elizabeth Ann Seton, 19th century
  + Booker T. Washington, 19-20th centuries
  + Emma Willard, 18-19th centuries
  + Martha McChesney Berry, 19-20th centuries
  + Mary McLeod Bethune, 19-20th centuries
  + John Dewey, 19-20th centuries
  + William E. Du Bois, 19-20th centuries
  + Anne Sullivan Macy, 19-20th centuries
  + Woodrow Wilson, 19-20th centuries
  + Dr. Samuel Gridley Howe, 19th century
  + Christa McAuliffe, 20th century

* Ask students to do individual written reports about these people, read biographies or autobiographies on their lives or do oral presentations in class.

* Assign oral presentations as part of roundtable discussions on how teachers have influenced our nation's history.

* Conduct interviews as socio-dramas. Have students role play famous interviewers such as David Brinkley, Ted Koppel or Barbara Walters. Have other students play the roles of the famous educators.

* Read articles from current news magazines or newspapers involving education issues. Discuss in class. If a controversial issue is involved, you might set up a debate. Example - "Resolved: The school year should be extended to include all 12 months."

* Review and analyze political cartoons dealing with educational problems or issues. Ask questions about the meaning and interpretation of political cartoons. Use them as motivation for discussion on educational issues.

* Have students create their own political cartoons on problems/issues related to the teaching profession.

* Direct students to write "letters to the editor" on educational issues.

American Government and Economics

* Discuss the important roles that state and local governments play in determining education policy and practices.

  + Invite a member of the school board to visit your class and discuss current issues and the budget.
  + Invite a member of the teachers' union to visit and discuss its role.
  + Review your local school budget. See how money is spent for education.
  + Invite the superintendent and/or principal to discuss the role of the teacher and their own roles in public education.
  + Invite several guests to participate in a panel discussion.

Interdisciplinary Activities

A study of the teaching profession lends itself well to an interdisciplinary approach because the content and skills involved in teaching cut across several subject areas. As you work on developing students' abilities to think critically, solve problems, make decisions and become aware of values, the following suggested activities are recommended for your consideration.

Since controversial issues and materials will be evident in these units, it is important for you to preview the content before deciding whether to pursue these approaches with your students.

Critical Viewing and Listening Skills

By the time the average American teenager reaches age 18, he/she will have spent more hours watching television than in school. We live in a world where the electronic media -- radio, television and movies -- shape much of people's knowledge of the world. Thus, it is important for

educators to help students understand this influence on their behavior. Critical viewing and listening skills are aimed at moving the viewer from being a passive participant to an active decision maker.

Since the teaching profession is a subject addressed in the media, an opportunity exists to use critical viewing and listening skills while considering issues involving teachers. The suggested activities below are based on the assumption of some prior work in critical viewing and listening skills. The class should have lessons on:

* Becoming aware of their own T.V., radio and movie habits
* What the various media are and why we use them
* How the media capture our attention
* Recognizing and identifying the underlying message of a show

Suggested Resources

* Develop a resource file of media programs that are appropriate for the aims and objectives of your lesson. This can be accomplished on your own using videotapes or with the school librarian's help. Your county Audio-Visual Aids (AVA) Commission may also have materials you can borrow. Check their catalog for resources and procedures. (Contact the office of your county superintendent of schools for information on your county's AVA Commission.)

* Contact the New Jersey Network (NJN), New Jersey's public television network, which has an educational services division. NJN offers workshops on how to teach critical viewing skills and sessions to familiarize teachers with how to use instructional television materials with your students.

Address: The Educational Services Division of New Jersey Network
1573 Parkside Avenue
Trenton, New Jersey 08625
Phone: (609) 530-5252
Channels: 23/Camden, 50/Montclair, 52/Trenton, 58/New Brunswick

Suggested Activities

* Have students watch a television show related to teaching, or a specific program you select and show in class.

* Have them report back on what they saw and heard about teachers.

* Give them a list of questions to keep in mind before viewing. (Students should help in developing these questions.) They can include:

  + How did the teacher(s) appear to you?
  + How were they dressed?

+ How did they speak? Were they quiet, passive, outgoing, animated?
+ Did they come across as individuals worthy of respect? If so, why? If not, why not?
+ What problems did the teacher or teachers handle? Were they successful?
+ How did they treat their students? Their fellow teachers? The administrators?
+ Did you see them in a drama, comedy or news program? How was the teacher portrayed?
+ How did the television image of a teacher compare with your real life experiences?
+ How did it compare to teachers you have read about?
+ Do you feel the image projected of teachers and the teaching profession is fair? If so, why? If not, why not?

* Teach students how to write and put on a television show. You may choose an interview format, using a famous educator as your "guest." For example, a student can role play the part of New Jersey's Governor, Commissioner of Education, or Teacher of the Year. Conduct the interview and videotape. Other possibilities include creating your own show or using a book that deals with a teacher's experiences for material. Or, you may want to use a roundtable discussion on a current issue, such as the teacher shortage, pay levels, or parental support/involvement.

* You can also use similar activities with television and movies. Be sure to check the ratings of movies and preview programs in advance to evaluate appropriateness for your students. Examples:

"To Sir With Love"
"The Miracle Worker"
"Blackboard Jungle"
"Goodbye Mr. Chips"
"Teachers"
"High School" (documentary)

The Newspaper

The teaching profession can also be highlighted through a unit on the newspaper. These are a few suggestions. You and your students should "brainstorm" and add others.

Suggested Activities

* You might begin by developing an understanding of various parts of a newspaper: masthead, front page, lead article, news articles, editorials, columns, political cartoons, obituaries, features, human interest stories, and display and classified ads.

* Discuss the roles of reporters, editors and staff members who sell advertising space and produce the paper.

* Ask the students to write various types of articles, related to the teaching profession and educational issues.

* Create your own class newspaper. Develop an issue focusing on the teaching profession. Include:

  + An editorial about an important issue, such as basic skills or testing.
  + A political cartoon about a key issue or event.
  + Inquiring photographer - ask teachers and/or students a question about the profession.
  + An anecdote or a favorite recipe from a teacher.
  + Interviews with teachers from various areas of specialization (e.g. art, music, special education, etc.) on their work and how they prepared for their careers.
  + Sports news showing how a teacher made a significant contribution to an athlete's or team's achievement.
  + Highlight teachers who are in charge of student clubs or activities.

* You may want the students to write their own individual newspaper related to the teaching profession set in some other time period. Example: Ancient Greece, colonial New England, New Jersey in the year 2001.

* Have students write a "letter to the editor" of a local or school newspaper on an educational issue they feel strongly about. They may want to express thanks to a teacher for doing some special contribution.

* Invite a reporter who covers educational issues to come to class. Have students interview the guest. The material they gather can be used in your class newspaper. Perhaps the reporter can distribute copies of articles he/she wrote to students for analysis.

* Interview a local school board member in class and use data gathered for the class newspaper.

* Have students conduct a survey on an issue, such as teacher salaries. Results can become part of your class newspaper.

Reports and Term Papers

Reports and term papers are also appropriate for encouraging exploration of the teaching profession.

Skill Lessons

* Begin by conducting skill lessons on topics such as:

  + How to gather information for a report
  + How to take notes

- + How to organize materials
- + How to write an outline

* Assign reports or term papers on teachers, the profession or issues in education.

Suggested Topics

* Famous educators, their lives and contributions.

* Current issues and their impact on the profession. Examples:

  - + Teacher shortages
  - + Controversial topics, i.e. teaching of evolution, censorship of books
  - + Educational programs in colleges and their effectiveness in teacher preparation
  - + Alternate route for teacher certification
  - + Drug and alcohol abuse
  - + The latch-key child
  - + Student discipline
  - + Twelve month school year
  - + Comparison of U.S. education with other countries, such as Japan and U.S.S.R.
  - + Effects of students dropping out of school

* Other topics developed by you and your students during class discussions and review of current events.

CONCLUSION

This resource and activities guide is only one of a number of materials developed in response to requests from teachers and guidance counselors who indicated that they would like to help their students understand the teaching profession. Other resources developed by the New Jersey Department of Education include:

* Exploring the Teaching Profession in New Jersey: An Activities Handbook for Teachers and Future Teachers -- A guide to arranging student programs, activities and services that allow middle or secondary students to experience teaching and learn about how to prepare for a teaching career. Activities can be conducted individually or through an organized Future Teacher Club.

* Teaching... It's a Vital Profession -- A brochure that provides basic information on teaching in New Jersey.

* "Teaching... The Vital Profession" -- A sample speech and audience handout to be used by teachers. This basic speech on the teaching profession can be adapted for a variety of audiences and events, such as school career nights, PTA functions, meetings of community organizations (Lions, Kiwanis, League of Women Voters, etc.), meetings of student honors organizations (National Honor Society, Boys/Girls

State, etc.) and other occasions. Accompanying the speech is an audience handout which can be reproduced in the quantity needed on a photocopier.

* How to Become a Teacher in New Jersey -- A pamphlet describing the basic educational requirements and the various ways to become a certified teacher in New Jersey.

* Activities to Promote Teaching: A Counselor's Guide -- A list of activities for guidance counselors, such as ways to promote teaching at career fairs or career nights, to help students become informed about the teaching profession.

* "Programs to Enhance the Teaching Profession in New Jersey" -- A summary of state-level programs designed to reward, recognize, renew and recruit fine teachers.

To obtain a copy of these materials, write:

TEACHING
New Jersey State Department of Education
CN 500
Trenton, NJ 08625

These materials, however, are intended only to provide information and sample activities. The success of New Jersey's communication campaign will ultimately depend upon the creativity and commitment of the teachers and guidance counselors who implement programs focused on the teaching profession.

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About the Author

Dr. Marlene Rosenbaum earned a bachelor's and a master's degree from Brooklyn College and a doctorate from Rutgers University. She has taught junior high school social studies in New York City and courses in elementary education at Rutgers University. Rosenbaum has also been a field placement coordinator for Rutgers, placing and supervising undergraduate pre-student teachers. In addition, she has been an instructional television curriculum coordinator for New Jersey's public television network. A member of Phi Delta Kappa, Rosenbaum has served on the executive boards of the New Jersey Council for Social Studies and the Middle States Council for Social Studies.

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